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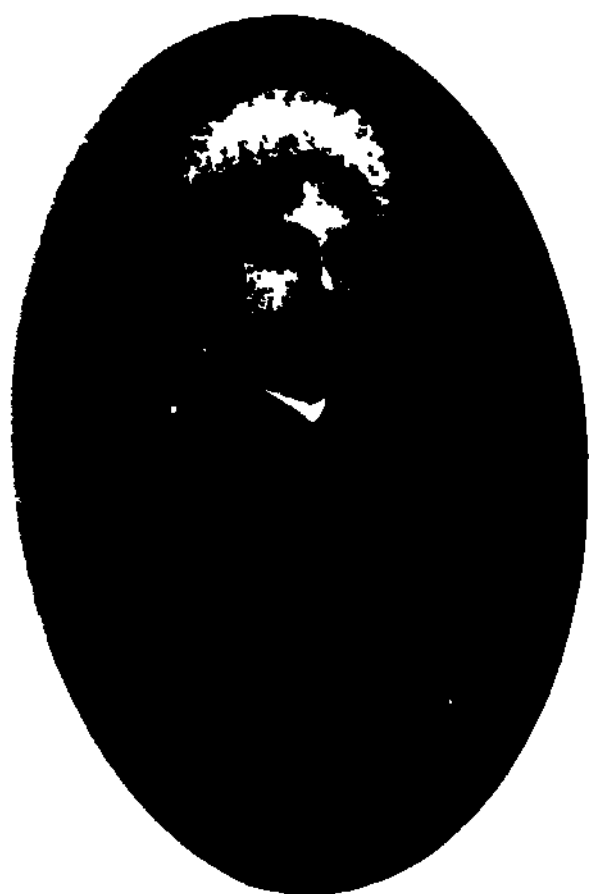
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Biography

The Short Sketch of the Life of
SIR EBRAHIM H. JAFFER OF POONA.
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Published by—Munshi Abdus Subhan Rajab
2015 B. Gaffarbeg Street, Camp Poona.

Printed by—J. P. Bangale, at the
Loyal Printing Press, 449 Raviwar Peth,
Poona City.



The advancement of Muslim education has been the dominant factor in Sir Ebrahim's public life. He has been untiring in his efforts, both inside and outside the Provincial and Imperial Legislative Councils, in pressing upon the attention of the authorities and of the public bodies concerned, the claims and needs of his community with due regard to the rights of all other communities. These efforts, as his biography shows, have produced a rich harvest.

Sir Ebrahim Haroon's organizing power as General Secretary of the Presidency Muslim Educational Conference has been tested over and over again to his credit at the several sessions of the Conference. It is generally acknowledged that the result of the Conferences has been an appreciable increase in the number of Muslim pupils in the educational institutions of the Presidency.

The biography is an inspiring record of Sir Ebrahim Haroon Jaffer's varied activities, which cover a wide field including the Cutchi Memon Bill, Cantonment grievances, local self-government, election malpractices, bank legislation, indigenous industries, factory labour, Haj hardships, cinema censorship and medical research.

M. ABBAS ALI BAIG.

The Honourable Khan Bahadur Ebrahim Haroon Jaffer.

Part 1.

Preparing for Service.

When some future historian writes a history of the growth of education in India, one name which will shine as a star in the firmament is that of Sir Ebrahim Haroon Jaffer of Poona, who, by dint of patience and tact and enthusiasm, has done much solid work for his Muslim brethren in the past quarter of a century. Few men in India have such a record of sacrifice and service, & few men have lived to see their efforts rewarded in so definite a manner, not merely by His Majesty the King-Emperor, but also by the remarkable progress in every line of activity which he undertook. If he set his hand to the advancement of Muslim education, then Muslim education advanced in no uncertain manner; if he decided to organise Muslim Educational Conferences, then the idea grew until several districts in the Presidency now hold such a conference every year; if he worked for the good of the residents in cantonments, then a number of changes for the better were sooner or later announced; if he undertook to improve the conditions under which the Haj pilgrims travelled to Mecca, then those pilgrims found ample cause to bless his name; if he realised that his fellow Cutchi Memons were in need of having their grievances redressed, then the Government were soon convinced that an early redress was necessary; if he made up his mind that Muslim boys needed a public school, then within a handful of years a Governor of Bombay laid its foundation stone at Panchgani; if he entered political life to further the cause of India, then his eagle eye and keen mind have exposed the weak points and supported the strong points of the constitutional system; in short, whatever he turned his hand and mind to reach successful finality before he would let the matter drop. His patience and persistency in this matter have become proverbial in political circles, and it is evident

enabled him also to acquire considerable landed property in Poona.

But it must not be imagined that all this worthy man's attention and time was devoted to his own personal affairs. Far from it; he was active in the field of public affairs as he was within the walls of his own office. Social service, then a very rare commodity in the Presidency as far as ordinary citizens were concerned, became to him a hobby, and manifested itself along both educational and medical lines. As might be expected a career suddenly cut short could hardly bring to fruition any efforts at improving education amongst Muslims, especially as at that time educational reform was practically unknown; and so it was left for the work so nobly started to be carried on by his son. But his sacrifice and energy when Poona was thrown into confusion at the first serious epidemic of plague singled him out as an organiser and public worker, and so it is safe to say that of all the acts of usefulness and service which stand to commemorate Mr. Jaffer Jussuff the establishment of a plague hospital stands prominent.

Nor must it be forgotten that in those early days, it was no simple task to establish such an institution. The masses were decidedly antagonistic to the novel idea of submitting to hospital treatment whilst the quarantine stations and segregation camps speedily hardened their hearts against the efforts of the authorities to stem the tide of the deadly plague. And so as a missionary of quarantine, segregation, hospital and treatment the splendid citizen, and for weeks took his life in his hands as he moved about among the people urging them to listen to reason and to make some effort to save their lives. His efforts were in a great measure successful as far as the people were concerned, but they proved fatal to himself, for while he was throwing his whole energy and time

into this noble, charitable, and meritorious work he fell a victim to the dread scourge in August, 1899 his death calling forth from His Excellency the Viceroy, Lord Curzon, whilst on a visit to Poona, the following eulogium: "I have learned with regret of the death of the worthy citizen of Poona, Khan Bahadur H. Jaffer Junsuff who contracted the plague in the very hospital which was called into being largely by his munificence and activity." Lord Sandhurst the then Governor of Bombay also held this distinguished citizen in very esteem, for his message of sympathy read thus: "I had great regard and respect for Khan Bahadur H. Jaffer Junsuff, a most worthy man indeed."

A BORN STUDENT.

Of such a splendid citizen came the successor as head of the firm, although it was decidedly unfortunate that the sad catastrophe of his father's death came at a time when Ebrahim Haroon Jaffer was in the midst of his studies. Born in 27th December 1881, he had at an early age evinced a love of study, and his father, having experienced the lack of a suitable education for his business and social work, gave all assistance possible to the youth who was showing such a keenness for learning. Of course there were many obstacles in the way, but it is on record that with that inherited tenacity of purpose which had so marked all the dealings of Khan Bahadur H. Jaffer Junsuff, the eldest son of his second wife overcame them all and carried on his education in the manner he had marked out for himself. Whilst still young he had passed the public service examination and had become a Government Scholar, and this success gave him the first public opportunity of showing his generosity and thoughtfulness for those less fortunately placed than he was. At his request the scholarship which his talents and brains and hard work had won, was handed over to a poor student in his school. This action was typical of his whole career, and many times since he

has thus shared his good fortune or the fruit of his labours with others who were in greater need.

Always at the head of his class, both at the Poona Camp Government School and the Poona High School, he gave promise of a useful and marked future, and many times his teachers gave frank utterance of their conviction that in the young student there was a future leader of the country, although it is doubtful whether even these men who came into such close touch with him realised as to how exalted a position he would rise, and he knighted in his prime as an Emperor's reward of his services for Muslim education and other signal services in India. Nevertheless all who knew him were not one whit surprised when the results of the 1899 matriculation examination were published to find that their young friend had passed with distinction, being the first member of Kutchi-Memon community to matriculate, and the second in the whole of the Presidency.

But as has so often been the case in the life of Sir Ebrahim Haroon Jaffer, this particular joy and honour was made bitter with sadness and disappointment, for immediately before the examination news reached him he was called to be chief mourner at the funeral of his father who had so nobly laid down his useful life for the ignorant and suffering masses of Poona and who had given the lead to the idea that in time of adversity the needs of humanity must give place to the whims of a community. And from the life of service for others which has so marked the career of Sir Ebrahim, it seems that he made a vow at the grave of his father that he would carry on the work and endeavour to improve the lot of all those backward classes who cared not for education because they knew not of its advantages.

21. But it was at the graveside of the father also that he was confronted with one of the most serious problems of

his whole career. The business which has been left in trust for the family was by this time a very extensive concern with wide operations in many branches of commercialism : but it was at that time somewhat financially complicate. Without his hand at the helm to steer it, there seemed very probability that it would be driven on to the rocks of disaster, and hence his friends advised him to devote his entire time to saving the business. But on the other hand the young man had made up his mind during his youth that he could only give of his best and be of the greatest use to his country if he was educated, and so he was determined to pursue his studies to the end of the course he had mapped out for himself. To take full charge of the business would doubtless mean that his life ambition would have to be shelved and that he would have to be content with having made for himself a mark in the world as a successful man of commerce, or even a merchant prince. After much careful thought, the ambition to serve others predominated over a desire to make friends by joining the Deccan College to finish off his education under that renowned scholar Dr. Selby.

THE CALL OF BUSINESS.

Events, however, showed that he could not do the impossible. With that keenness and enthusiasm of youth, which is even now as strong as ever it was, the young man endeavoured to be a student at the Deccan College and the manager of his firm at the same time, but eventually he had to give up education and devote all his attention to the firm. Family troubles also made his task far from easy, and he had to spend much time and tact in endeavouring to conciliate the different factions which made themselves apparent amongst his relatives. This meant that for the next seven years most of Mr Ebrahim Haroon Jaffer's time had to be entirely devoted to his

family interests, although with his indomitable will and tireless energy he managed to find an occasional hour in which to carry on some of the philanthropic schemes and educational reforms which he and his father had instituted. These seven years, however, were by no means wasted, even from the view point of his public work, for in that period the business was so established and systematised and financed that from then until now the ardent worker found himself with considerable leisure in which to carry out his ambitious plans for the betterment of his brethren.

The stage was now set for real action. Encouraged by his father's example; inspired by his father's sacrifice; undeterred by a hundred obstacles; prepared by a good education, steadied by a period of difficult business experience; tested by a host of private troubles, and called by a great need of his people, Mr. Ebrahim felt that the time had come for him to do something worth while and worthy of his life's ambition. He accordingly plunged into public life in real earnest, and within a comparatively short time the municipal administration of Poona, the Bombay Council, and the Imperial Council heard his ringing voice and felt the weight of his experience. His work in each of these directions must form the subject of different chapters of this biography, mention of them being made here merely to show that from the outset his work was by no means one-sided and that he intended to give of his time and energy and experience to all communities. He was one of those few Muslims who took any live interest in politics in the pre-reform days, and his work then made of him a valuable worker when India received a fuller measure of self-administration under the Reforms. His speech in the Imperial Legislative Council on the occasion of His Majesty the King-Emperor's proclamation of the Reforms stands out, not only as the creed of a loyalist and the gospel of a cons-

stitutionalist, but also as a dignified assurance of a Muslim and an Indian on what India expected of His Majesty's Government. Of all the speeches made on that occasion, Mr. Jaffer's stands out, for conciseness, plainness and dignity, as one to be preserved, both as a statement of his past views and a promise of his future co-operation. He said:

"We in this country have always hailed with the highest reverence and cherished with the deepest loyalty the utterances and pronouncements of the British Sovereign with respect to the policy of His Majesty's Government in connection with the progress and status of the people of India. With their traditional attachment to the Throne the Indian people have combined a reasoned conviction about the beneficence of their Sovereign, whose words have ever worked as a charm upon the minds of all classes and creeds in this country .

"The gracious proclamation of His Majesty the King Emperor has a still greater significance (than the Charter of 1858), and will occupy an abiding place in the hearts of His Majesty's loyal subjects. That proclamation, coming as it does, at a momentous stage in the history of this ancient land, breathes the spirit of generous appreciation for the aspirations of the Indian people, and is instinct with sentiments of Imperial goodwill and benevolence, and is full of inspiration for officials and non-officials who have loyally and whole-heartedly to carry out the policy laid down for their guidance . . . The Royal Proclamation heralds a new era, a new epoch in the development of India's destinies, and very opportunely indicates the lines along which officials and Indians must work if that epoch is to bring progress and happiness to the country. Opinions may differ as to the length to which the Reform Act will take us in the path of constitutional freedom and of elevation to national status. But there

is a general agreement that the Reforms constitute a substantial advance and are calculated to give India full responsible Government and an equal status in the Empire at an early date . . . On behalf of the people, and especially of the Mohammedan community, whom I have the honour to represent in this Council, I beg leave to give a humble but strong assurance that the Royal Proclamation has evoked a loyal and hearty response, and I trust similar sentiments will prevail on the official side."

But perhaps our attention should now be called to the great problem which first faced Sir Ebrahim Jaffer, namely, the extension of education among the Mohammedans, and which, more than anything else he has made his life-work with conspicuous success. That, therefore, will form the subject of our next section.

Part II.

THE BATTLE AGAINST ILLITERACY.

From his early days of youth, Mr. Ebrahim Jaffer was fired with an ambition and a resolve to uplift and ameliorate the condition of his co-religionists who were so backward in education, although at that time his was almost a lone voice crying in the wilderness. There were not half a dozen Muslims in the Presidency who recognised that the chief plank in any platform of progress was Education, and not even half of these were prepared to spend their time in this much-needed and praiseworthy service. But, almost single-handed, Mr. Jaffer set about putting his convictions into practice, and slowly but surely opened up new avenues towards the goal. His own convictions were strengthened beyond any shaking when he read of the lives and views of such all India figures as Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and other eminent educationalists who held the view that the salvation of

the country lay in education, and so his whole heart and soul went into a cause than which no better could have been selected.

The nucleus round which he could work had already been established by his father, in whose life time the foundation of the Islamia school building had been laid. But when Mr. Ebrahim Jaffer walked into the stage of action, the school was in its infancy, although its endowment was anything but satisfactory or definite. Within a comparatively short period the Islamia School building became recognised as a real Memorial to Khan Bahadur Jaffer Jussuff, and the good work commenced by him is still being carried on and is looked upon with pride and gratefulness by all the Moslems of Poona and the district. The School was opened on September 10th, 1907 by His Excellency, Sir John Muir Mackenzie, Acting Governor of Bombay, and quickly improved in enrolment and attendance. When Lord Sydenham inspected the School less than three years later he said: "It is most encouraging that in two years the pupils have risen from 40 to 322." And from that day to this the School has made an excellent name for itself, and many of the students who have completed their education within its walls have made their mark in the world of citizenship.

It is also interesting to note that even in those early days of educational reform, Mr. Ebrahim Jaffer manifested his wide outlook and his liberal views by advocating female education, of which he has always been a staunch supporter, and he made liberal provision in the Islamia school for girls, many of whom have taken advantage of the opportunity during the past twenty years.

MASS EDUCATION.

But the vision of Mr. Jaffer was too great to cause him to bottle up his energies in purely parochial

activities, and so he decided to attack the great problem of mass education. Just at that time, by a singularly happy coincidence, the late Nawab Zada Nasrulla Khan initiated the scheme of a general provincial body to further the interests of the Muslim community. Quick to see the great possibilities of such a scheme, Mr. Ebrahim Jaffer threw himself into organisation of what has now become the tremendously useful and influential Bombay Presidency Muslim Educational Conference, and right from the start a campaign of propaganda in matters of Muslim education began its mighty work. Through the energy and enthusiasm of Mr. Jaffer, who accepted the onerous and none too enviable office of general secretary of the Conference, sessions were convened at different centres of the Presidency, particularly in those areas where the Mohammedans were admittedly backward in educational matters. Poona was the venue of a number of sessions, of which that held in 1903 stands out; whilst to stir up his co-religionists in the southern division, a most important session of the Conference was held at Dharwar, which gave a new turn to educational reform in that area and set on foot a move which is still to be seen and the results of which are to-day visible in the number of public men from the southern division Moslems who are doing excellent work at the present time.

His vision was also manifested in another way in connection with these conferences. With a view to facilitating the interchange of ideas between officials and non-officials and to break down the barriers which by some had been erected to hamper educational progress when initiated by sources other than those of Government, Mr. Ebrahim Jaffer instituted the custom of giving an "At Home" at all sessions of the Conference, to which the Governor of Bombay and all leading members and

officials of the Government were invariably invited. This social function not only resulted in certain petty jealousies amongst delegates being explained away but also provided a common meeting ground where, in an unofficial atmosphere of freedom and friendliness, important questions relating to the subjects discussed in the Conference could be thrashed out over the tea-cups. It is no secret to say that during these happy "At Homes" more knotty problems were solved and more contentious resolutions smoothed down than could ever have been decided in the formal sessions of the conference meetings. Many a tale of remarkable compromise and excellent success could be told of these social gatherings, and if only officialdom could speak and relate its confessions, it is no exaggeration to say that even Governors and Members of Council would admit that their attendance at the conference "At Homes" was as educative as it was pleasant and the deciding factor in many a scheme of Government assistance to Moslem educational institutions. In these days we are apt to take such gatherings for granted and as the usual things, but when Mr Ebrahim Jaffer introduced the plan the "bureaucracy" was in full swing, and access to a high Government official was obtained only by those who knew the magic "Open Sesame" to the Secretariat doors. .

EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCES.

His interest in the All-India field was especially marked by his activities in the 1913 session at Surat, and the 1919 session at Rairpur in Sind, culminating in his being selected as President of the All-India Moslem Educational Conference at Amroti in 1920. This session was held at a time the N. C. O. movement was at its zenith, and when people who were striving for the stability of the country and for responsible Government had a very stiff row to toe. At this time particularly general

discipline and authority were being undermined and schools and colleges were either being emptied or were turned into hotbeds of sedition and dissension. No more difficult situation could have confronted a President who was a public man; yet here the Hon. Mr. E. H. Jaffer made a speech which undoubtedly was the finest of his career. In his presidential address he demonstrated to the full how out spoken he could be even in face of the prospects of an unyielding boycott, and he spared neither his own community nor the leaders of the N. C. O. Movement. Not that his speech was dogmatic, didactic or boastful, far from it. Indeed, he distinctly said, "This is not the time when you can rely on the advice and guidance of a single individual. The whole system of our education is faced with destruction and it should be our united aim to find means to avert this grave calamity." Yet he felt it was his duty to convince the representatives of the Muslim Community at the conference, as well as the outside public, that the system of education then existing, though imperfect, had its share of usefulness, and that until they themselves could provide an infinitely better substitute, it was their duty to make the best of what they had. At such a time a lesser man would have hedged by making his speech a chain of meaningless platitudes; but not so the Poona stalwart of education. His speech was an exceptionally keen and well reasoned summary of the situation and the only means of solving the great problems with which they were faced; and as it presented such an excellent picture of the Hon. Mr. Jaffer's foresight, frankness, and tact, certain paragraphs must of necessity form a part of this biography.

Without frills the President jumped at once into his subject in his very first sentence which rang out like a clarion call of warning and duty:—"The present session of the All-Indian Muhammadian Educational

Conference is being held at a critical period of our national existence, when momentous and almost revolutionary changes are taking place in the country, and conditions are changing with such a kaleidoscopic rapidity that one can hardly guess the ultimate end. On the one hand there is a reform scheme which is being hailed by a section of the people as a harbinger of an era of administrative reform, and on the other hand the country is seething with discontent and the alluring ideal of Swaraj is being dangled before the eyes of the people who are led to believe that non-co-operation will usher in a new EL Dorado. The result is that our intense absorption in politics has made us entirely indifferent to questions of vital importance to our national well-being. This indifference has extended even to education which has done so much to raise our ideals of life, which has inspired every healthy movement amongst us and to which alone we can trace our recent awakening and the new-born desires for political freedom.

"But indifference apart, there is yet another obstacle in the path of education which we have to overcome. The promoters of the non-co-operation movement, as you all know, have included the destruction of the present system of education in their programme, and this has added immensely to our difficulties, so much so that I doubt if we can easily overcome them."

He then passed on to a few general comments on the Khilafat question, to give the results of his x-ray examination of the devastating Non-co-operation Movement:—"The apostles of Non-co-operation are advising students to boycott all institutions, maintained or aided by government, on the plea that this action on their part is required by their religion. I am not in a position to say anything about the religious aspect of the case, but I wonder why the ULEMA have been indifferent to this

question so long? Religious considerations apart however every sane man can realise that a sudden boycott of educational institutions will spell disaster for the nation and specially the Moslems. This is the reason why I hesitate to believe that this loss is justified on religious grounds in the absence of an authoritative decision of the ULEMA. In any case this is a question which cannot be shelved, but should be solved in a satisfactory manner so that the people may have a clear lead in the matter.

"There are three parties in the country at present with regard to non-co-operation. The first regards it as the weapon by which Swaraj can be attained, the second exhorts all Moslems to follow it as a religious duty, while there is a third party consisting of men of moderate views who are in search of a via Media but have not yet succeeded in finding their goal."

He lamented that up to that time the ULEMA had not spoken with a clear united voice on the religious aspect of the revolt against the government system of education, and then went on to declare in the most unequivocal of language his views "as a member of the Moderate Party":-

"I am of the opinion that every sane man should co-operate with Government, but by co-operation I do not, of course, mean that we should be at the beck and call of the officials or try to secure their good-will at any cost, for such action on our part would neither be beneficial to Government nor to the Community. I am therefore constrained to say that the whole country has been deeply stirred by the grievous turn taken by the Khilafat question and by the heart-rending events in the Punjab. Would that we could forget them, but the mere exhortation of responsible officials to forgive and forget can have little soothing effect, for our wounded hearts require a healing

balm, lest the festering sore develope into a cancer, and mere empty words exasperate the people still further.

"I am as opposed to the indifference of the Government towards the existing discontent in the country and the want of confidence of the people in it as to the giving up of education as a part of non co-operation. It is incumbent on Government to redress the wrongs of the Punjab and have the Turkish Treaty revised, for it is the bounden duty of a Government to respect the feelings of the people it governs and to have due regard for their rights. This change of front on the part of Government will be welcomed throughout the country and will greatly help in restoring confidence, since repressive measures can never be beneficial either to Government or to the people. The moderates who are prepared to co-operate with Government will rally round its banner if they were assured of a changed angle of vision. This is the only way in which the country can be pacified, and to my thinking it would be more advisable to remove the causes of the present discontent than to insist on people forgiving and forgetting. It might be urged that a radical change of policy would be looked on as a sign of weakness. But this I think is absolutely contrary to fact, as such a change will rather evoke feelings of gratitude throughout the country. People who advise Government to rule by force underestimate the depth of popular feeling on the one hand and on the other seek to ruin Government by misleading it "

The next portion of his address demonstrated not only his scholarship but his political sagacity and is worth quoting at length as an example of the ideal subject matter of presidential addresses :—

"You are well aware that the decline of the Mussalman began long before 1857, but the traditions of a thousand years of sovereignty are hard to kill and they are

still under the delusion that their prestige was unimpaired: The events of 1857 however made a clean sweep of the last vestiges of their political power by the extinction of the Moghul Empire, although long before that the inroads of the Maharattas and Sikhs had reduced Moslem power to a mere shadow and the growing power of the English was sounding its death-knell. The loss of Empire is the forerunner of grave calamity to most nations and, in the case of the Mohamedans, the result was that even powerful families were reduced to poverty. The decline of learning and of arts among the Moslems was a natural corollary of these events, for their progress depends upon the patronage of Government; when this support is withdrawn their decline is sure and certain. The wages of sin is death. Our present degraded condition and the loss of our empire are due to the fact that we became deficient in the qualities for sovereign people. God himself says that He entrusts only those with the Government of the world who are qualified to govern it. As the loss of empire was due to their own faults it was their duty to bear their self-inflicted calamities with patience and to set their house in order, so that they could acquire as much political power as was possible under an alien government. This they could only do by learning the arts and science of the dominant people. But they were blinded by passion and prejudice and they had also a grievance against the English as the supposed author of their ruin. They could hardly see that the English were an alien people who had no prejudices against them and that they could be expected to deal justly with the various people of India, as they had nothing in common with them. It is, however, a fact that the Moslems neglected English education in the early days of British rule in India and they are still suffering as a result of their initial blunder. It is noteworthy in this connection that the Hindus in spite of their religious prejudices and

caste restrictions at once took up the study of Western arts and sciences and even began to travel to Europe. This is very strange in view of their religious customs which prohibits foreign travel, and was probably their first attempt after a long time to renew their relations with the outside world. But Moslems who had no prejudices against foreign travel and the acquisition of learning submitted a memorial signed by 8000 persons to Government in 1835 praying that not a single penny should be spent on Western Education as it tended to make people Christians."

Under such foreboding conditions as these it is not surprising that the speaker, with a touch of sadness born of experience, declared : " It is not an easy task to make a people appreciate the blessings of education," and he then announced a prophecy which has been fulfilled to the letter :—

" I assure you that this movement will end in destroying all Moslem institutions and we shall rue the day we took part in it. It will be as injurious to our interests as our prejudice against English education was in the early days of British rule, and subsequent generations will lay on us the blame for disregarding the interests of our youth and wrecking the only means by which they might have hoped to work out their political salvation."

Against the evil consequences of participation in that suicidal movement the prophet has been fighting ever since he gave the warning, on the one hand appealing to his Community to reform their social conditions and on the other advocating a general acceptance of the essential principles of national education. Verily, Moslems have lived to " rue the day they fostered and encouraged the N. C. O Movement ; and many who laughed at the Hon. Mr. Jaffer's prophecy in 1920 are now following the lead he has given towards ameliorating the effects of those

misguided steps towards the supposed goal of Swaraj. The stern warning given in those difficult days of 1920 by the Hon. Mr. Jaffer, urging his co-religionists not to seal the door of their young men by grasping something which was illusory, is undoubtedly one of the greatest actions of his career and definitely sealed his reputation as a far seeing and fearless statesman.

But while he was thus acting as a wise leader to his community at large, this indefatigable educationalist was doing great things inside the Legislature, and his record in the cause of educational advancement in both the Bombay and Imperial Councils before the reforms is equalled by few. Resolution after resolution moved and supported by him in the local council was given effect to by Government. As far back as 1913 he gave whole-hearted support to the Hon. V. J. Patel's resolution in advocating an early beginning in the direction of free and compulsory elementary education, and although he was not backward in pointing out the difficulties, his speech was decidedly constructive.

Another outstanding resolution was that moved in 1917 asking for a larger proportion of Scholarships to be ear-marked for Mohamedan students, and after accepting it, Government speedily gave practical effect to it, whilst Mr. Jaffer also saw to it that Government did not go to sleep over the utilisation of the interest from Sir Mohamed Yussuff's donation of eight lakhs for Scholarships for Mohamedan Students. He also kept a watchful eye on the progress of Urdu training Colleges and the enlargement of their scope, and it was through him that additional training classes were started in Poona in 1918. Then again year after year at each Budget presentation he brought forward the claims of his community for larger consideration and pressed so persistently for greater expenditure under this head that his efforts were amply rewarded by the maximum grants being given.

*Part III.***MANY PUBLIC ACTIVITIES.**

Ever thoughtful for the general convenience of his community, the tireless politician brought in a most popular resolution, which the Government accepted, substituting Friday for Sunday as a holiday in all Government, Municipal, and local Board Mohamedan schools, thereby removing impediments from the paths of Muslim students, and facilitating the demands both of their religion and their education.

At the same session of the legislature, he strongly upbraided the Government for their dilatoriness in allowing the important measures recommended by the committee on Mohamedan education to lie on the shelf for more than four years, even though the measures themselves had been accepted by Government, and his stirring speech drew from the Minister in charge not only a confession of considerable delay but also an assurance that "a serious effort would be made to remedy the fault immediately." It was at this session also that the Hon. Mr. Jaffer received from the President of the Council a remarkable tribute demonstrating his willingness not only to compromise but also to give credit where credit is due. This is the tribute paid by His Excellency Lord Willingdon:—"I can only say to the Honourable Member that I am sure the Government and the director of Public Instruction are deeply grateful to him for his most generous appreciation of Government's action, which I am bound to say we are rather unaccustomed to from non-official Honourable Members." Commendation such as this given to a member who had been so persistent and importunate in his demands on Government, reveals how highly his services were thought of by that very Government on whose educational side he was such a thorn.

IN THE IMPERIAL COUNCIL.

Nor did Mr. Jaffer's efforts relax when he entered a higher sphere of political labour in the Imperial Council in 1919. Rather they were enlarged, his success as a speaker and persuader making him a popular choice for the exposure of mistakes and the redress of wrongs. But in all his activities he always had a ready tongue for his community's needs, particularly along educational lines, and so it was not surprising that one of his first moved should be a resolution calling for a full and detailed enquiry by the Central Government into the response made by all the Provincial Governments to the suggestions and recommendations of the Government of India regarding the extension and improvement of Muslim education during the preceding seven years. His speech on that occasion was a series of repier thrusts at the indifference and slackness of the various governments, and he then rubbed salt into the cuts by his shrewd suggestion that there was an obligation on the part of the Government of India to see their own recommendations carried out.

Perhaps the only other activity in educational matter which should be incorporated in this brief biography is the part the Hon. Mr. Jaffer played in the passing of the Aligarh University Bill. Although generally giving his support to the Bill as brought forward by Government he did not hesitate to point out the ways in which it might detrimentally effects his community and to suggest amendments designed to remove those pitfalls. All of these amendments were not passed, but it is important to note that certain incidents which have occurred during the past few years have shown how much better it would have been had Mr. Jaffer's far-seeing suggestion been adopted. And his personal influence as a member of the Aligarh University Council has in no small measure given assistance along the lines he originally suggested.

It is difficult in the case of a politician with such a host of activities to select any particular endeavour for special mention, and yet this section of a chapter dealing with the Hon. Mr. Jaffer's work for his community would not be complete without an account of his Cutchi Memons Bill and his successful efforts to improve the condition under which the Haj pilgrims left India.

THE CUTCHI MEMONS BILL.

That the passage of the Cutchi Memons Bill through the Imperial Council was no easy task is shown by an extract from the supporting speech of Mr. C. A. Kincaid a nominated official, who was surprisingly unstinting in his praise. He said "I wish on behalf of the Presidency of Bombay and on my own behalf to thank the Honourable Mover and to congratulate him on the skill and success with which he has piloted this bill to this advanced stage. The bill is not exactly what the Honourable Mover wished, or what the community wished, and I think it speaks volumes for the tact and patience the Honourable Member that he should have convinced his community as to the wisdom of accepting the Bill as it now stands. Indeed in accepting it I think that they showed good sense, good will a reasonableness, and a readiness to co-operate with Government, which other persons in other parts of India would do well to take as a model for their own conduit."

Even the Hon. Sir William Vincent was forced to pay tribute to the Mover:— "I congratulate the Honourable Member on the successful termination of his efforts to secure this change in the law. I think it only fair to say that had it not been for his perseverance the Bill would not have been passed into law this session indeed when he introduced it I thought it would be impossible to enact it before the reformed Council came into operation. It was so easy for Government to postpone it until non-official

opinion was better represented. But the Honourable Member was very insistent; indeed there were times when I was so much occupied with other business that I have listened to his eloquent advocacy of this Bill almost with a sinking of the heart." It is not to be wondered at therefore, that as the Bill was being passed, one grateful Member of the House exclaimed: "I have no doubt that the name of the Hon. Mr. Jaffer will for ever be remembered by the Cutchi Memons Community."

And rightly so, for in thus realising one of his life's ambition the Hon. Mr. Jaffer secured for his community an enactment by which the anomaly of their being governed by the Hindu Law of inheritance and succession was removed, and an injustice of many generations abolished. And how did he work this miracle? Only by insistence and publicity, for the Hon. Sir William Vincent declared during the debate that non-official members had "never before had such detailed information placed before them with such authority." Thoroughness of detail has always marked the politics of Mr. Jaffer and hence his unvarying success even against opposition.

HELPING THE HAJIS.

In endeavouring to ameliorate the lot of the Hajis, the astute politician adopted a different course. Having by judicious questioning in the legislature obtained knowledge of Government's share and responsibility, in 1924 he tabled a resolution calling for a committee of enquiry into the Haj grievances. But even then he did not let the grass grow under his feet. He had informal talks with the member in charge ostensibly to sound the views of Government, and on being assured that the Member in Charge would personally visit Bombay to investigate the Hajis grievances he withdrew his resolution recognising that more drastic and immediate action could be taken by the responsible

official of Government than by a slow committee. As a result of his activity, the conditions of the Hajis both during embarkation and disembarkation and even during travel have distinctly improved.

Helping all Communities.

It might have been concluded from the foregoing that the political activities of the Hon. Sir Ebrahim Jaffer were restricted to the interests of his own community, but far from it. True, he was a firm believer in each community possessing staunch and fearless representatives, having in the Imperial Legislative Council (in February 1920) warmly defended communal representation as "one of our hard earned rights," but he was nevertheless very solicitous over the rights of others. To illustrate this, a rapid survey of his many speeches in the Bombay Council and the Imperial Council show that he definitely associated himself with Cantonment grievances, local self-government, indigenous industries, Ayurvedic medicinal research, the influenza epidemic, conditions of factory labour, cinema censorship, the conditions of postal workers, and Indian coinage. No opportunity was missed in bringing forward the needs of the varying classes and communities, although perhaps he is best known (next to his educational activities) as the champion of the residents in the Cantonments his work for which, however, must form a separate section of this review.

Without going into details in connection with his other activities, brief reference must be made of a few of them. As it is difficult to sort them out into their order of importance, perhaps their best place will be to make a hurried trip through the years and follow in Sir Ebrahim's foot-steps as he marches through successive Councils commenting briefly on the most prominent of his general activities therein.

In the Bombay Council of 1916 he strongly supported the Government Bill to amend the Municipal and Local Boards Acts so as to give greater punishment for corrupt and illegal election practices which had by that time become so rampant as to be "a shame to any civilised society." Indeed, it was the firm stand taken by Sir Ebrahim in exposing some of these practices at great cost and anxiety to himself which resulted in Government bringing forward the new Bill, yet even then, despite his own sad experience, he urged that an additional Court of appeal be provided for alleged delinquents.

In 1918 we find him moving a resolution calling for the establishment of a pharmacological research institute for experiment with indigenous drugs. The idea received unanimous support from all parties, the Surgeon-General in particular being especially enthusiastic over the scheme and it was carried unanimously.

In the same year he was successful in getting a resolution passed which vitally affected the whole of the younger generation of the Presidency, calling for a full enquiry by Government into the effects of the many restrictions imposed on the admission of students into secondary schools. And once again the results of his agitation amply justified his expenditure of time.

During the devastating influenza epidemic of 1918, Sir Ebrahim urged upon the local Government the necessity of a full enquiry by experts into the causes, nature, and remedies of the sickness, and as a result of the discussion the Bombay Council asked the Government of India to conduct a full enquiry into the matter.

Passing by several matters of more or less minor importance, we come to the important debate in 1920 on the reduction of the pound sterling from Rs. 15 to Rs. 10,

Sir Ebrahim Jaffer was one of the few members who urged that such a vital subject be very carefully investigated and not rushed through the House in a few hours, and he maintained that the exchange conditions were then far too abnormal and unsettled to justify any sort of currency legislation. Similarly when a resolution was under discussion on the need for an enquiry into industrial finance and the establishment of industrial banks, the business side of Sir Ebrahim Jaffer manifested itself and in a brief but very telling speech he showed that industries in India required the encouragement and support of the State if the rapid economic development of the country was to be brought about.

Fighting for Cantonment Rights

But it must be admitted that by far the most important of his non-educational activities was his fight for the rights and privileges of residents in the Cantonments. Living under strict military rule, the property owners had had no political stalwart to plead their cause or to demand redress for the wrongs committed against them. With his usual zeal, talent, and persistence, the Poona politician became champion of their cause, and started off by asking numerous questions in the Imperial Legislative Council which speedily showed the military authorities that they would have to stop needlessly treading on the toes of cantonment residents. Not that he was bigoted anti-cantonment-walls, but rather that the good of the whole community was his special care. In fact in 1918 we find him pleading for assistance from Government for the cantonment committees, urging that all primary schools conducted by the Committees, be placed upon the same footing as those run by other local bodies with regard to grants-in-aid and other facilities, and his point was made

so clearly that the resolution was accepted by Government.

For several years Sir Ebrahim took the lead in the activities of the All-India Cantonments Association, and he did excellent service in a dozen different directions, including membership of the Government's Cantonments Reforms Committee. His real opportunity however, came when the Government of India introduced their Cantonment House Accommodation Amendment Bill, of the select committee of which he was made a member, an appointment which in itself was nothing but an acknowledgment of the excellent work he had been doing in that direction. Indeed, as with another Bill, it can safely be said that it owed its existence almost wholly to the persistent agitation on the part of Sir Ebrahim Jaffer against the grievances the Bill was removing. His speech on the completed Bill was another illustration of his fearlessness and tact, for while he proclaimed its essential incompleteness and defectiveness on the other hand, he freely thanked Government on the other hand for the few crumbs of comfort that had been thrown to house owners in the Cantonments. Had it not been for the unflinching persistence of Sir Ebrahim Jaffer, General Sir Charles Munro, in replying to the First Cantonment deputation ever made, would never have said in 1920,—“I agree with you that the present Cantonment Law, which was made half a century back, has outlived its need. It requires thorough overhauling and change.” And when the Bill, which Sir Ebrahim hopefully described as “the first fragment of Cantonment Legislation,” was passed, His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief admitted that it was enacted in order “to help owners and to improve the law which undoubtedly was in the past unsatisfactory and required amendment.”

Then when in 1924 the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the administration of cantonments, His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief freely stated in the Council of State that the question of reforming the system of Cantonment administration was first brought into prominence by the efforts of an association in the work of which "my Hon. friend Khan Bahadur Ebrahim Jaffer, a member of this Council, has a'ways taken an important part." In his speech moving the Bill, Lord Rawlinson admitted the great need for a change and in a large measure accepted the arguments which the All India Cantonments Association, headed by Sir Ebrahim, had been putting forward for years.

Grateful though he was for the honest attempt to improve the conditions of people living in the cantonments, the Poona enthusiast was not to be hoodwinked into a belief that the Bill was perfect. In his speech on that occasion, he crossed swords with His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief on several points, and demonstrated in the clearest of ways that although introduced ostensibly to introduce into Cantonment administration the spirit of the Reforms some of the "improvements" suggested were actually retrograde proposals by no means consonant either with the spirit of the Reforms or with the ideals of British justice.

Considerable prominence had been given to these retrograde steps in the Presidential address made by Sir Ebrahim at the third session of the All-India cantonments Conference at Meerut in 1922, his speech being a wise mixture of compromise, tact and firmness. He freely admitted that the new Bill was a first step towards liberalising the administration and that it should be judged in the light of its being the first time in the history of Cantonments that an attempt had been made to introduce an

element of popular representation but on the other hand he maintained that on several points the officials had manifested a halting and grudging attitude. Yet even in saying this, Sir Ebrahim showed considerable restraint. To use his own words: "The task of a peoples representative is not an easy one. If we are to differ at every point from our official colleagues on the committee, the very object of forming such a committee would be defeated. In such a case it would have had much the same effect if we had each submitted his views separately to the Government. The value of a committee lies in the discussion that takes place at its sittings and the regard and consideration that have to be shown to the views of those who differed from us in a spirit of fairness. It was with this desire for a compromise, without allowing it to jeopardise our vital interests, that I participated in the proceedings of the Committee.

It was obvious that all the changes desired by the Cantonment Association could not be adopted at once and so in the belief that it would at least do some good in the direction desired he would not oppose its immediate passage. And this is the statesmanlike way he explained his course. "I realise that no enactment is perfect when it is first made. Any shortcomings it has and that may come to light, in its actual working, are remedied by a future amending Bill. It is in this hope that I request the House, Sir, to consider and pass the Bill without any amendment. Sir, I know the feelings of my fellow residents of the Cantonments who have kindly reposed confidence in me in this matter. They conferred upon me the great honour of electing me as the President of their Conference in the Meerut session when the Cantonment Reform was discussed and deliberated upon, in all its essential details. With the trust they so generously

place] in me I am in a position to say that they desire the Bill to become law immediately and not to subject it to any further delay by trying to get its defects remedied by moving amendments. I yield to this popular desire and I hope Sir, that this House will extend a similar regard to the wishes of the Cantonment people in this connection and pass the Bill in its existing form.

And this brief summary of his work for the Cantonments of India cannot be closed without quoting his great faith in the future as expressed in the last paragraph of his Presidential address at Meerut.

"I am not a pessimist. I have a great faith in British statesmanship. I have never found it wanting when it is applied with a will and a zeal, I am sure that the present dismal outlook in the country will give place ere long to one of brightness and hope and we, the lesser beings in the Cantonments of India, will find a ray of new light in the coming Reforms which I am sure will, in the hands of Government, take a shape that will then be readily acceptable to us."

In the Council of State.

To attempt to deal with all Sir Ebrahim's recent activities would in itself be a very great task. All matters of important questions have occupied his attention. In the Council of State, he has established a reputation for work which would be hard to beat whilst in Poona he ungrudgingly gave of his time to public service. The Great Presidency Agricultural Show at Poona-the greatest ever held in Asia-readily appealed to him and for his work done to make it a success he received the special thanks of the Government of Bombay.

At the same time he was also endeavouring to put to sure foundation the Bombay Presidency Muslim Educa-

tional Conference of which he was the secretary and as a result of his work district Conferences were held in 1926 and 1927 in the Kokan, the Karnatak, and other parts of the Presidency. He speedily saw that even this widespread enthusiasm would be of little avail without adequate funds and hence it came as no surprise to those who know him to read the following prominent article in the *Times of India* of January 30th 1927:—

“A considerable stir will doubtless be caused in the Muslim world by the appeal which is being issued by the General Secretary of the Bombay Presidency Muslim Educational Conference for the immediate establishment of a large fund to promote the cause of Muslim education, carrying out the idea so forcibly expressed by him at the last session of the Conference that it was time the conference added deeds to their oft-repeated words that they must take the lead in promoting education amongst their co-religionists. In this appeal, the Hon Sir Ebrahim Jaffer first summarises the past record of the Conference and the general support which its work had received from all influential Moslems, and even from the different Governors of the Presidency. As a result of these combined efforts there had been a very satisfactory increase in the number of Mohamedan pupils receiving instruction throughout the Presidency. At the last Conference His Excellency Sir Leslie Wilson urged upon the Conference leaders particularly to arrange for “the provision of funds on as generous a scale as the community can, even at some sacrifice, afford”.

The General Secretary says in the course of his appeal:—“The work which the Conference is already doing requires to be properly financed. For this it needs to be placed on a permanent footing as has been done in the case of the All-India Muslim Educational

Conference. The donation to our Conference of Rs. 15,000/- by H. H. the Mir of Khairpur has provided a suitable nucleus, but it requires to be developed. The annual expenditure incurred by the Conference for the varied work which it carries on, amounts to at least two lakhs and until that income is secured any progress or even a continuance of this work, is impossible. I have, therefore, to appeal to all Muslim to strengthen the hands of the General Secretary, and I especially request the merchant princes of the Presidency and all Muslims to help forward the public work of the education of Moslems. I particularly draw the attention of this appeal to the holders of Trust Funds".

"This is the first definite attempt that has been made to establish a really adequate Muslim Educational Fund, and if it is successful should go a long way towards translating the talk of many years into achievement."

RECENT LEGISLATIVE WORK.

There should perhaps now be summarised very briefly a few of the miscellaneous problem tackled by Sir Ebrahim in the Legislatures since he first entered them, apart from his educational activities.

Indigenous Medicines.—Thanks to his resolution a committee was appointed in 1918 to recommend what steps should be taken to start a pharmacological laboratory or research institute in medicine for scientific experiment with and research into indigenous drugs. In moving the resolution Sir Ebrahim pointed out that thousands of drugs were being used daily by medical practitioners all over India and he believed that if indigenous drugs were to be scientifically investigated and experimented with and their properties definitely assessed, drugs which undoubtedly have a great value could be placed on the

market at a comparatively cheap rate. He also believed that such an investigation might open up a new and profitable industry in the country as well as largely assisting in stamping out the quackery which was so rampant. The resolution was most cordially supported by the whole medical profession and by the Surgeon-General with the result that the Government Member in accepting it said : "Even if I wished to oppose it I should find some difficulty in doing so in the face of the opinions that have been expressed by our own experts in the matter".

Influenza Epidemic:---Towards the end of 1918 when the influenza epidemic was exacting a terrific toll from India, Sir Ebrahim moved a resolution in the Bombay Council which undoubtedly awakened the Presidency to a realisation that they were faced with a dire calamity and so he urged that instead of leaving the matter to the leisurely research of experts, a committee be appointed by the Government of India to make full and immediate enquiries into the origin, nature, and treatment of the dread disease. This resolution also was received with much favour by the medical profession and by the Surgeon-General with the result that it was unanimously passed. Just how great a debt of gratitude the people of this Presidency owe to Sir Ebrahim for getting that resolution passed will never be known.

Stabilising Banking:---One of his most important resolutions was that moved in March, 1926, and passed later on in the year, asking Government to order an enquiry into the question of legislating with a view to place Indian banking on a sound footing. Sir Ebrahim introduced his subject with a speech that was as fine a piece of logic as it was literature, demonstrating that he

neither asked for the moon nor expected miracles from Government. He said :—

“ I wish to make it clear at the very outset that I have no delusions as to the beneficent possibilities of Government interference in such matters as the growth of sound banking, which depends more or less on efficient management, integrity and mutual confidence. Founded on credit and trust, banking can receive little assistance from the rigid provisions of law enacted for the regulation of its operations, and must be allowed to develop in an atmosphere of freedom, of a proper appreciation of its advantages and an honest effort to secure them. If I therefore, propose an enquiry as to the desirability of banking legislation, I do so mainly with a view to securing the removal of obstacles and the creation of favourable conditions for the healthy progress of banking in India. It is recognised on all hands that modern banking is yet in the early stage of its development in this country, and that everything that the State can do to facilitate its expansion and improvement, without undue interference, is to be welcomed. The present appears to me to be an opportune moment for an enquiry into this question, as we are fast approaching the restoration of normal conditions, in our financial and industrial life, and a discussion of this subject promises to be fruitful.”

In speaking of the resolution, the Hon. Mr. A. G. Mcwatters, Secretary of the Finance Department, said:—
“The question, or series of questions, which are raised by this resolution are second to none in importance among those which confront the country to-day, and I am sorry that we have not with us to-day the Hon. Mr. Phiroze Sethna”.

When after a postponement, the Hon. Mr. Phiroze Sethna did appear on the scene, he made a lengthy speech

supporting the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

Unclaimed Moslem Interest:—In the Council of State of February 1927 Sir Ebrahim Jaffer moved that steps be taken to make available for the improvement and expansion of Muslim education all interest accruing from deposit in postal savings banks and Government securities belonging to Mussalmans who do not owing to religious scruples receive interest therefrom, and this arrangement be given immediate effect in provinces, in which Muslim public opinion is agreeable to the scheme.

The mover pointed out that the summary of opinions of provincial and other minor Governments as forwarded to the Government of India on the subject showed that the majority of Muslims consulted were in favour of the formation of a fund for the purpose he had suggested and the majority considered that no serious religious susceptibilities of the community would be offended. The majority of local governments also did not raise any objection to the scheme. There was a slight opposition to the proposal on the part of a minority and for this reason he had moved in his resolution that the scheme be put into immediate operation only in provinces where there was no special opposition.

Mr. Brayne could not accept the resolution although Government had no desire to avoid the obligation. Constitutionally the Government of India's money could not be spent on a provincial transferred subject. A stronger objection was that there might be some Mahomedans who would refuse to receive money for education from a source which was tainted.

Mr. Brayne did not reply to the debate. The motion was declared carried, Government not challenging a division.

In this same session Sir Ebrahim moved two other resolutions of a national character, both of which were carried.

Control of Medicinal Drugs:...In urging all provinces to control the traffic in medicinal drugs by legislation for the standardisation of the preparation and sale of such drugs, Sir Ebrahim made a powerful speech in which he indicated those responsible for a very dangerous increase in the drug traffic. He quoted from the discussion at the last Science Congress that there was a tendency among practitioners to overdose their patients with drugs which meant that an enormous amount of money was wasted on medicines. He did not intend to interfere directly with provincial control over ordinary narcotic drugs such as opium, because he realised it was a matter connected with the excise revenue and also that excise policy came under the Transferred Department. There should, however, be absolutely no difficulty in seeing that drugs and drug preparations manufactured in the country were subject to Government control to ensure that the quality of the preparation was at least up to the standard laid down in the pharmacopoeia. All over the world there was human misery and suffering due to the indiscriminate use of drugs ostensibly as medicines but actually as narcotics and intoxicants. He, therefore, declared that a fight must be waged against the threatend dangers to the people of the country.

Tuberculosis:—In the course of his speech at the same session urging that a conference should be called to discuss the question of the provision of tuberculosis hospitals, sanatorium and institutions for training practitioners in tuberculosis treatment throughout India. Sir Ebrahim Jaffer said:—I feel I must call for the immediate attention of this House and the general public to the menace with which we are faced by the great white plague against which we

have as yet for some reason or other never pitted our real strength. The figures that I shall quote, erring perhaps on the conservative side, will probably astound every member of this House. A modest calculation puts the number of consumptives in India as sixty lakhs, a total which provides an annual death-roll from this disease of twelve lakhs. The estimate is that at least one per cent of the population is infected with pulmonary tuberculosis, meaning a total of thirty lakhs suffering from this phase of the disease, with another thirty lakhs ailing with non-pulmonary consumption. Moreover, the disease is admittedly on the increase, recent official and non-official enquiries all over India have elicited the information that during the past twenty years there has been a noticeable progressive increase in the extent of infection by about 50 % over the previous figures. And what is the position regarding relieving the distress of this vast army of consumptives. According to official figures, there are barely six hundred beds in sanatoria to accommodate these sixty lakhs of consumptives, whilst even with our chain of hospitals and dispensaries, the average annual total of patients treated, indoors and outdoors, for respiratory diseases is less than one and a half lakhs out of the sixty lakhs who need treatment.

In view of what I have already told this House, I think it will be agreed that the great task can only be tackled by a central organization, working with, or perhaps composed of representatives of the different Provincial Governments. The exact composition of such a central body and its detailed functions can be decided after this House has accepted the principle of my resolution, but I desire to have it definitely agreed that immediate action of a comprehensive character is necessary. In short, the chief functions of this conference will be first to outline a practical scheme, then to finance it,

and finally to arrange for a central organisation to control and co-ordinate the work carried out. As for the scheme to be devised by the Central Board I propose that it should first consider the establishment of a chain of hospitals, or dispensaries, or clinics, around India to give free treatment to all desiring it. I do not propose that these hospitals should be of an elaborate character, but should take the form of the dispensaries now established in many districts by municipalities and district local boards. It might even be possible to combine the operations of these dispensaries with the work suggested in the combating of consumption.

Regarding sanatoria, I believe there should be more of these useful institutions, although I feel that the expense involved would rather recommend an earnest endeavour to get private philanthropists to undertake this phase of the task. It might be possible to arrange for such institutions to pay their way when once they were established, and it seems to me that in such a country as India, where luxury in housing accommodation is not the rule but the exception, the establishment of a number of simple but useful sanatoria would not be so expensive a task as appears on the face of the proposition.

The last part of my resolution calls for a series of institutions for training workers to deal with the great white plague. This I admit will be the last phase of the organisation of any scheme for, as I have already pointed out the preliminary work can be successfully carried out with certain additions to the existing system of dispensary services and hospital facilities. Of course, if a real effort is to be made to stamp out this dread disease, it will in the future be necessary to have an army of trained workers and I look forward to the time when such an army is available. But it would seem that for the time being we shall have to content ourselves with a direct attack

with the resources at present available, ultimately using the existing dispensaries as jumping off places for the establishment of larger institutions in which additional village workers can be trained, I would not ask, even despite the urgency of the subject, that we should expect to have corps of highly-trained experts on tuberculosis to carry out this work, for I fear that in such cases we often demand too elaborate a system of workers. A body of workers who know the principle causes the disease, who know how to administer the treatment, and who would be successful in explaining the preventive measures to be adopted are the workers that are needed, and I feel that such a body could easily and speedily be trained once the general scheme of operation was started by the Central Body".

In commenting upon the resolution the "Evening News of India" said:—"Recent enquiries by officials and non-official agencies have shown that there has been a progressive increase in the number of people suffering from tuberculosis. The time has definitely arrived when a co-ordinated effort must be made to grapple with the disease. This can only be done by a central organisation working with, and composed of, the different Provincial Governments. What Sir Ebrahim Jaffer aims at in his resolution is the formation of such a central organization. The first preliminary step is the summoning of a Conference as suggested in the resolution. This Conference, with the necessary expert advice must first of all outline a practical scheme to fight the white plague then suggest how it should be financed, and finally arrange for a central organisation to control and co-ordinate the work."

*Part IV.***Working for Local Self-Government.**

Perhaps we should now turn a little nearer home and chronicle Sir Ebrahim's activities along the lines of local self-Government. It may safely be said about the Poona City Municipality and the Poona School Board. He was a member of the former body for a number of years and chairman of the latter, and it must be admitted that his chairmanship was not only most successful but was also a much coveted honour for Mohamedan in a city like Poona which is such a stronghold of Brahminism. Indeed he was the first Mohamedan to attain that position.

He was nominated as a Municipal Councillor by the Government of Bombay in 1906 to fill the gap left by that great statesman, the Hon G. K. Gokhale. He quickly showed his capacities and within a few months became a member of the Managing Committee and later of the Sanitary Committee where he made his presence felt with a vengeance.

Even as an ordinary member of the Municipality, Sir Ebrahim was responsible for a number of educational improvements which although minor in themselves, gave a strong indication of his activity, enthusiasm, and future success. His ceaseless anxiety for the educational progress of his community quickly had its inspirational effect on the leaders of other communities, and as a result Poona jumped into the forefront as a progressive town in all educational matters. The following is a skeleton outline of the improvements made whilst he was Municipal Councillor and Chairman of the School Board from 1912—1915.

1. More commodious and sanitary houses, were provided for the Urdu Schools.

2. An additional school for Mohamedan girls was opened and made permanent.

3. An additional school for Mohamadan boys was opened in a central locality and was made permanent.

4. Extra night schools for the poor Mohamedan boys were started in Kasba Peth.

5. An English class was added to No. 10 Urdu boys school so as to teach Mohamedan boys English. This class became very popular, and the Director of Public Instruction sanctioned it as an experiment for three years and to be made permanent after that period.

6. A Mohamedan teacher was sent to Victoria Jubilee Technical Institute at Bombay at the expense of the Municipality and returned qualified to teach scientific weaving.

7. A weaving class for the benefit of the weaver community, under this qualified Mohamedan teacher trained in Bombay was set working satisfactorily.

8. Seven more trained Mohamedan teachers were added to the teaching staff. A scheme was placed before the Municipality to give scholarships to some school boys and to train them for this purpose.

9. One Mohamedan school was made a free school in consideration of the poverty of the Mohamedan in that quarter.

10. School fees were reduced by one half in all schools.

11. Special attention was paid to the education of Mohamedan girls. Three Mohamedan girls have been awarded scholarships to enable them to attend the Female Training College. When qualified they were appointed as mistresses. This was the first occasion on which this had been done.

12. Special attention was paid to drill gymnastics, and Arabic teaching.

13. An annual Municipal grant of Rs. 150/- was sanctioned and given to the Radriah School started by the Bohra Community.

14. An annual Municipal grant of Rs. 50/- was sanctioned and given to the Vetal peth Islam Library.

15. Local School Committees, the members of which were selected from the leading Mohamedans in the localities concerned, were formed for the purpose of supervising Urdu Schools within their respective localities.

16. The number of Mohamedan pupils increased from 500 to about 800.

17. A proposal was sanctioned by the School Board to appoint an assistant superintendent or super Master to supervise the Urdu Schools.

It is especially interesting to note that all the above improvements were effected without demanding any increase in the grant previously made by the Municipal Council, a feat which incidentally shows the business acumen of the distinguished leader. As much credit is due for that as for the fact that his activity quickly placed Mohamedan schools on an equal footing with Hindu Schools in Poona.

At the same time as he was doing this excellent service, the indefatigable worker was an Honorary Magistrate (and later chairman of the bench) and a member of the following special Committees—

The Poona Plague Relief Committee (During Plague)

The Poona Plague Committee for the City Municipality.

The King Edwards Memorial Fund Committee.

The Cantonment Coronation Committee.

The Ahmednagar Famine Relief Committee as an Honorary Secretary.

The South African Distress Committee as an Honorary Secretary.

He was also serving on the following charitable Committees of Poona:—

The Poona Juma Masjid (as a Trustee).

The Poona Islamia School (for boys and girls) as a Managing Trustee and Treasurer.

The Poona Anjuman (as a Trustee).

The Sorabji Padamjee Charitable Dispensary.

The Countess of Dufferin Fund (Poona Branch).

The Society for the protection of children.

The Poona Temperance Association.

The Nutan Marathi Vidyalaya (as a Fellow).

The St. John's Ambulance Association (as a life Member).

The Bombay Presidency Mohamedan Educational Conference (as Treasurer and General Secretary).

The Bombay Presidency Moslem League (as a Treasurer).

Communal Representation Logic.

Sir Ebrahim's views on Communal Representation in the local Municipalities were most pronounced, although that must not be interpreted as meaning that they were tactless, vindictive, or narrow. By personal experience he found out that the Mohamedans must look after themselves. When in 1918 the question of Communal representation in municipalities by separate electorates was brought before the Legislative Council of Bombay, Sir Ebrahim made a remarkably cogent and well-balanced speech which is well worth quoting as a model of tactfulness, firmness and logic. He said:—" I should have very much liked to get the discussion of the question raised in the resolution before the Council postponed to a more suitable time. The whole subject of constitutional reforms is now being universally agitated and Moslem representation on local bodies by separate electorates is one among the

several important points which are engaging the attention of the people in the Government. The recommendations in this respect of the Local Self-Government Committee on which I had the honour to work are likewise before Government and are, I doubt not, under discussion. A specific proposal like the one embodied in the resolution would, under the circumstances, appear to be inopportune. As the question, has, however, been actually raised, I feel it my duty to express my views thereon and to lend my support to the principle of the resolution. I can not also refrain from observing that in a way my honourable friend is right in pressing for the acceptance of his proposal with regard to Mohammedan representation on municipalities. There are some who are uncompromising opponents of all separate electorates, but at this time of the day, they need not be taken seriously at all. There are, however, those who admit the necessity of giving special representations to Mohamedans but they would do this through mixed electorates. And it is essential that the Moslem view in this matter should be clearly put forth so that there should be no misunderstanding about it.

“Now, I had myself moved a resolution in this Council some time ago asking for the special representation of Mohamedans on the Poona City Municipality and I know the disabilities under which Mohamedans have to labour in the matter of their proper representation on Municipalities and local bodies. I have long tried in vain to get redress for this serious Mohamedan grievance in Poona and I am sure that nothing short of communal representation by separate electorates will solve the problem. On this morning the results of the ward elections in Poona City were declared and it is pertinent to note that in spite of all efforts made in that behalf the Mohamedan Community would not return a single Mohamedan

member. This has happened continuously during the past 34 years. I am anxious that my attitude and that of those who think with me, should not be misunderstood by my non-Mohamedan friends, we do not wish in any way to mar the harmony that is necessary among the various communities of India in its march towards self-government, and sincerely wish to do everything in our power to promote a large national unity, but I request my friends with all the earnestness I can command to look facts in the face and to realise the keenness and the determination of the Mohamedan community to secure special representation. We feel that our progress—which means also the general progress of the country—is bound up with the concession of the demand of communal representation and nothing will be gained and a good deal will be lost by opposition to this demand. I would go further and say that national progress would be hampered if the wishes of the Mohamedan community are not met. The principle has been always conceded in the constitution of the Councils and there should be no hesitation in taking the next and logical step of extending it to municipalities and local bodies.

“This is not only an empty sentiment; there are substantial and practical reasons behind the demand. There are a number of questions among those the municipalities have to deal with which probably elected Mohamedan members alone can satisfactorily tackle. Questions like those of slaughterhouses, burial grounds, music in public streets and purdah cause a lot of friction between Hindus and Mohamedans and must be dealt with in a spirit of harmony and good-will. And I must emphasise that mixed electorates will not do to get the right kind of members on the municipalities. Mohamedan candidates will have always to look up to non-mohamedan

voters who will be in a majority and the members elected will represent a non-mohamedan constituency rather than the mohamedan community whose representatives they ought really to be. Both the elected members and the mohamedan community will thus be placed in an extremely awkward position. Nomination of Mohamedan Members will not give the representatives whom the community wants, and in the case of municipalities having a right to elect two-thirds of the councillors it is impracticable. Mixed electorates will prove utterly unsatisfactory, as I have endeavoured to show, and we are reduced to the alternative which has been suggested in the resolution before the Council. I trust that honourable members will approach the question in a spirit of sympathy and a desire to understand the Moslem points of view and to conciliate Moslem feelings."

This very clearly shows character of the speaker and the manner in which he handled the most delicate subjects.

But his educational work did not cease with a successful administration of the Poona City School Board. For a number of years he had cherished the idea of establishing a school in the Presidency based on the lines of the English public school, and in 1918 he made up his mind that the time was ripe for such a venture. Its novel character did not at first commend it to the general community, and so his first great task was to enlist the sympathy and win the support of the rich merchants of Bombay. His silver tongue and his evident sincerity quickly loosened the purse-strings by convincing them of the soundness of the project, and so in 1919 the plans for his Moslem Public School crystallised into actuality. He obtained the cordial co-operation of Dr. Sir Abbas Ali Baig and other well known Muslims, and induced some other

friends to lend a commodious bungalow and equipment at Panchgani. Sir Ebrahim is not one who has to wait until he has all the cash in his pocket before launching a scheme. Once he has satisfied himself of its practicability and of the support forthcoming from his friends, he makes a start with whatever meagre facilities at his disposal. Who but he would have started the first "public school" in a private house? Yet he felt that if only he could get the scheme started, it would very quickly show its usefulness and importance. The school was accordingly opened in its modest home in August 1919, and for some time it was his hand at the helm of affairs which steered it clear of shoals and rocks and storms. To encourage others he put his own sons on the attendance roll. His faith and sacrifice were quickly rewarded, however, for after he had acted as secretary and trustee for a few months, the school justified its inception to such a degree that some wealthy Bombay merchants came forward (inspired, of course, by Sir Ebrahim's persuasiveness) and donated sufficient money to enable to purchase 180 acres of land just outside Panchgani. The foundation stone of the permanent school was laid by His Excellency the Governor of Bombay, at Panchgani in May 1920 and now the famous Darul-uloom is one of the brightest gems in Panchgani's sparkling crown of educational institutions. Had it not been for the foresight and persistence of Sir Ebrahim Jaffer, Panchgani would have nurtured schools belonging to every important community and denomination except the Mohamedans.

*Part V.***Rewards for Service.**

Then came the reward. So quite and unostentation had been his work that his Knighthood at the birthday honours in 1926 came as a great surprise to hundreds of his friends, although to those in high places this great honour was not unexpected. He had been made a Khan Bahadur in 1919, but a grateful Government felt it their duty to show that no matter how relentless a critic a man may be he was entitled to the highest reward provided his criticism was just and constructive.

Letters and telegrams rained in upon the new Poona Knight, and numerous parties were held to congratulate him. The largest of these from the citizens of Poona was the greatest function of its kind ever held in the home-city of Sir Ebrahim and was attended by His Excellency Sir Lealie Wilson. The following is the description of the function published in the "Times of India" of September 8th 1926:-

"No man has done more during the passed few years for the cause of Muslim education than the Hon. Sir Ebrahim Jaffer" said His Excellency the Governor this afternoon at the special party given by the citizens of Poona to Sir Ebrahim Jaffer in honour of his recent Knighthood. "His public work has shown him to be very worthy of this high honour and he must himself be highly delighted at such a representative gathering as this to express the appreciation of Poona. We will congratulate him most heartily, for he has a very fine record of service." His Excellency said that he wished particularly to pay tribute to the excellent work done by Sir Ebrahim in the sphere of Muslim education, for he had shown intense zeal and energy in that connection. Because of

the great work he had done in that and other directions, that he (H. E.) was personally very glad to be present at the party in order to add his own congratulations to those of the Poona citizens and to wish the honoured guest a long lifetime to enjoy his distinction.

The chairman of the entertainment committee in his remarks, first paid a tribute to the interest which His Excellency the Governor took in all Poona affairs and of the honour he was paying the Hon. Sir Ebrahim Jaffer by being present at such a representative gathering, and the speaker then thanked His Excellency on behalf of Poona for having added a new knight from this town to the galaxy of Knights in the Presidency.

The Bombay Presidency Educational Conference in general and the Islamia school in Poona in particular, the speaker said, owed very much to the work of Sir Ebrahim Jaffer, and it was largely through his efforts that sound education had been brought within the reach of the poorest of his community. Sir Ebrahim then turned his attention to wider spheres, and quickly made himself heard in the supreme councils of the country, and he is still a very active member of the Council of State whilst it must be further pointed out the reforms brought about in Cantonment administration were due very largely to the guidance given by Sir Ebrahim to the movement.

In the course of his reply Sir Ebrahim Jaffer said he had done so very little to deserve such a high honour. "It has always been my principal to co-operate with the Government when this co-operation leads to the advancement of the cause of the country, and to freely and frankly criticise such actions of the Govern-

ment as are, in my opinion, prejudicial to its interests, it is my ambition to continue to follow this principle in my public life for I believe this is the only sure way to the goal which we all have in view."

Amongst those present were Lt. General Sir Harold and Lady Walker, Sir Dinshaw and Lady Petit, Sir Ghulambussain Hidayatullah, Sir M. B. Chaulal, Sir Chunilal and Lady Mehta, Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Hatch, and all the leading civil and military officials with the chief residents of Poona, totalling well over 700."

After such a tribute from H. E. the Governor of Bombay no further recital is needed.

Part VI.

What of the Future ?

From the account of the different activities of Sir Ebrahim Jaffer which have been summarised in the foregoing pages, it will by this time have become very apparent that the whole of India was his sphere, and that no great problem frightened him from an attack. In nearly all national questions his hand is noticeable, whilst in connection with the educational advancement of his own community, he had unremittingly sought to utilise existing sources, and to discover and tap new ones in the pursuit of his one great aim. But even behind the curtain of public gaze he has always been ready to assist in all spheres, and hundreds of his own community (and of other communities) can testify to his wise council, his unfailing generosity, and his unlimited patience. His help has always been as unhesitatingly given as it has been unblushingly sought. On dozens of occasions he has brought his influence to bear on officials and non-officials in connection with the solving of some knotty

problems about some mosque, cemetery, or tomb, and it can safely be said that many a communal squabble which might have ended seriously has been settled by his wise arbitration and persuasive arguments.

His valuable services during the period of the great War alone show the great influence Sir Ebrahim wielded over his community. Faced as he was with the stubborn fact that the British arms had been lifted against the great champions of Islam, he nevertheless fought out the battle of justification with his own soul, and then set about the task of convincing his co-religionists that it was their duty to support the British Government. He did this by endeavouring to create a true conception and understanding of the real origin and aims of the war, and in this he had great success.

Nor was he any less exacting in the great battle for their rights which his community has had to fight in India. Month after month from the public platform and legislative forum, he has demanded the citizens' privileges which Moslems can claim by birth, law, and power, although he always associated with his demands the clear-cut assurance that they must always keep within the bounds of constitutionalism. Subject to that proviso he endeavoured to enthuse all his co-religionists with the idea that they must utilise every avenue for achieving their great object of making India a self-governing unit of a great Empire. To this end also he has never ceased to expound his principle of deriving the maximum benefit from the existing system of administration, and never hesitating to withdraw if it was proved that he was in the wrong or to yield to a compromise if by so doing he could at least gain something. His were not the tactics of a firebrand, nor was his the mentality of a non-co-operator. In fact, on general principles he was one of the first real Responsivists—a member

of "the old brigade" who responded to all the overtures of the Government and thereby demonstrated that co-operation always pays. It would never do to say that he never made any mistakes, for he himself is the first to admit that he is far from faultless; but unlike many other politicians he neither refuses to be open to conviction nor refrains from admitting his mistakes.

Poona has been the home of many reformers of various kinds not a few of them being renowned for their work in the realm of education; but standing out from them all in future years will be the name of the Hon. Sir Ebrahim Jaffer, who is to-day one of the most respected citizens of the Pearl City of the Deccan. As a politician he is famed for his sober judgment and steady views, though an ardent and faithful Mohametan he is no fanatical religious reformer, his policy being to stand by the old doctrines rather than to introduce modernism into his faith, whilst an educationalist he is entitled to be called a real pioneer of Mohametanism in the Presidency, if not in the whole of India. The very life of this great man is the story of the rise or the renaissance of education for Moslems in India; for few men have done more for their community and for their town and for their country in this direction than he has. And the very fact that his activities were so much needed in a community which had so badly neglected that very line of action which would have meant progress and a realisation of their ideals, adds importance to his pioneering work and luster to his name.

No movement, be it public or private, instituted for the benefit of his countrymen has even found him anything but an enthusiastic supporter, and to take his life out of the public affairs of Poona and Bombay Presidency

generous which would be as surprising
deplorable.

Today he is as active as ever, being in the prime of his life and at the height of his enthusiasm for both politics and social work. He still participates most successfully, and most moderately and most keenly, whilst in all social and national matters he is in the forefront of the attacks being made upon vice, misery, crime and illiteracy. Than this work, no man could do better, and it seems plain that a still greater future lies ahead of him than behind him, for no man is more surely carving for himself a niche in corridors of Indian history in which to place the memory of some thing accomplished than Sir Ebrahim Jaffer of Poona.

A quarter of a century of public life has made of the young Poona merchant a level-headed statesman, honoured and respected by Government as much as by his own community; and bearing in mind the fact that he is now in his prime he may be expected to play a still greater part in the intense and important drama that will be enacted on India's stage in the next few years.

Poona,
31st March 1927.

The End.

